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the view that the course of study should not consist of a mere collection of topics, but that it should be definitely related to the interests and abilities of the pupils, on the one hand, and to the needs of adult life on the other. This necessitates a study of children as well as of the activities of men.

Part III presents a clear discussion of the materials of geography, together with their collection, value, and use, but presents nothing new. One of the difficulties experienced by the teacher of geography has to do with the fact that under the method frequently followed all pupils prepare the same material, resulting in the loss of class interest. It is suggested that this be overcome by dividing the class into subgroups or by assigning individual work which is later presented to the class as a whole, with opportunity for discussion.

The project method is given full treatment, means of securing, selecting, and handling the projects being explained. It is shown that problems need not be confined to those related to the passing interests of the children, but that problems having a direct and vital relation to community and national affairs may be used with great profit. "Not only for self-realization but for the social welfare it is the duty of the schools to emphasize problem work" (p. 175).

The treatment of tests and scales is the least usable part of the book. Nevertheless, it has some value since it will doubtless stimulate specialists in geography to improve existing tests and scales, none of which are satisfactory at present since they deal primarily with the memory.

The "Suggestions for Further Study" and the "Selected References" found at the end of each chapter will be helpful to all who teach geography in the elementary schools.

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*Practical nursery school work.*—It has been said that the test of civilization is its attitude toward young children. In the pre-school age the kindergarten has done much for the child, but in the pre-kindergarten stage only here and there has anything been attempted, particularly for the children of people who are economically unable to give even their own time to caring for their babies. Since this is the period in which human life is most susceptible to disease, the price of neglect is paid by society, not only in the high death-rate of this period, but in the physically and morally defective specimens who survive. A book<sup>1</sup> describing the work done in the nursery schools of London and other English cities, which was published in England in 1919, has just been reprinted and made available for distribution by an American press.

The Introduction is written by Professor Patty Smith Hill, who evaluates the book in these terms:

Miss McMillan presents a most convincing study in the power of early environment, which provides for health of body and the refinements of beauty, saturated

<sup>1</sup> MARGARET McMILLAN, *The Nursery School*. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1921. Pp. xi+356. \$2.50.

with all those human values which make for morality, and mental and emotional health.

The importance of early influences has been appreciated by people of rare insight, or sympathy, in all ages, but society at large even today is singularly blind or indifferent to the practical outcome of such facts [p. v-vi].

The nursery school is a new departure in England, having been made a legal part of their educational system in August, 1918. It is distinct in aim and method from the baby-welfare centers and infant schools which have been established there for some time.

The book is made up of two general divisions. The first of these gives a description of the work of the nursery school and all that concerns the children who attend it. There are chapters explaining the buildings and garden, the diet and clothing of the children, the content and method of the work to be given, and the social life of the school. Part II is concerned primarily with the teacher and her preparation. It contains a wealth of suggestions for primary-school workers, relating both to the actual teaching and to the social activities of the pupils. Of particular interest is the use of outdoor experiences under the severe environmental handicaps of a city location. The fact that the work described has been carried on for nearly a decade adds considerable weight to the suggestions which are given. In the latter part of the book there are several chapters relating to the financing of the nursery school and the influence of such schools upon the subsequent education of children.

The book gives a complete and interesting account of a growing social work and will be of interest to many teachers in the field of kindergarten and primary education.

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*Reading material for the lower grades.*—Teachers of the primary and intermediate grades will be interested in a number of readers and manuals which have recently been published.

For the beginning reader, a new primer<sup>1</sup> by Walter Barnes and Martha Lane offers some excellent material. This book is not a *method* primer, but is intended as a supplementary reader to be used with any method. Its merits lie in its simplicity, its easy vocabulary, its interesting and attractive content, and its careful organization. The words, which are simple and in the main phonetic, are introduced gradually and are repeated sufficiently to provide for thorough learning. The illustrations and general make-up of the book are excellent.

Above the primer level is a new first reader<sup>2</sup> by Walter Taylor Field. The material in this book is quite varied and, on the whole, well selected. Frequent use is made of extended dialogue. There are 497 new words introduced, many

<sup>1</sup> WALTER BARNES and MARTHA A. L. LANE, *An Easy Primer*. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1920. Pp. 124.

<sup>2</sup> WALTER TAYLOR FIELD, *The Field First Reader*. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1921. Pp. 166. \$0.72.